

Board of County Commissioners

Division of Planning & Development

Code Compliance Department

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CODE ENFORCEMENT BOARD MEETING SEPTEMBER 10, 2007 6:00 PM

ATTENDEES:

Board members present - Horton Barnes, Charles Castle, Tommy Messer, Cheryl Barnes, Terry Pasko, Drexel Clark, and Dixie Ruzzo.

Staff members present - Gary Rusu, Lee Hartman, Alysia Akins, and Mary Jo Rutter.

Attorney Lee Hawkins was also present.

- I. CALL TO ORDER - Mr. Barnes called the meeting to order at 6pm.
- II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE - Mr. Barnes led the Pledge of Allegiance.
- III. ITEMS OF DISCUSSION:
 - a) Mrs. Akins announced that Bob Kegan, Building Official, sent his sincere apologies for being unable to attend tonight's meeting due to a conflicting meeting schedule regarding a Budget Workshop.
 - b) Introductions: Gary Rusu - Chief Building Inspector for Bushnell office, Lee Hartman - Chief Building Inspector for Oxford office, and Mary Jo Rutter - Staff Assistant to fill in for Mrs. Akins, when needed, were all introduced by Mrs. Akins. Mr. Rusu discussed his work history with the Building Department and informed the Board he will be attending a Code Inspector - Level I class in October 2007. Mr. Hartman explained he will be handling all code complaints located north of SR 44 and Mr. Rusu will be handling all code complaints located south of SR 44. Mr. Hartman stated he has previous code enforcement experience, along with two other building inspectors, Larry Sloan and Jim Shady. Bob Kegan, Building Official, also has previous code enforcement experience.
 - c) Explanation of changes due to reduction and re-organization of staff - The Building Department will be processing all code complaints.
 - d) Revised Complaint Form (attached) - The complainant's information is now required.

e) Policies and Procedures:

- 1) Complaint Submittal – All complaints will be submitted to Mrs. Akins.
- 2) Initial Inspection – Mr. Rusu or Mr. Hartman will attempt to meet with the property owner. If the complaint is building related, the Building Department will handle the issue.
- 3) Courtesy Notice of Violation (CNV) – Mrs. Akins will prepare and mail, as required.
- 4) CNV Inspection – Mr. Rusu or Mr. Hartman will inspect, or assign to a building inspector.
- 5) Notice Of Violation (NOV) – Mrs. Akins will prepare and mail, as required.
- 6) NOV Inspection – Mr. Rusu or Mr. Hartman will inspect, or assign to a building inspector.
- 7) Request For Hearing/Notice Of Hearing (RFH/NOH) – Mrs. Akins will prepare and mail, as required.
- 8) Pre-Hearing Inspection – Mr. Rusu or Mr. Hartman will inspect, or assign to a building inspector.
- 9) Code Enforcement Board (Hearing Presentation) – Mr. Rusu or Mr. Hartman will testify, along with any assigned building inspector who may serve as an expert witness.
- 10) Code Board Order – Mrs. Akins will prepare and mail, as required.
- 11) Hearing Inspection – Mr. Rusu or Mr. Hartman will inspect, or assign to a building inspector.
- 12) Lien – Mrs. Akins will prepare, process, and mail, as required.
- 13) Foreclosure – Mrs. Akins will forward cases to the County Attorney, as required.

f) Sumter County Code and Florida Statute Requirements: (attached)

- 1) Complaint Process Timeline
- 2) Hearing information included in RFH/NOH notices
- 3) Code Enforcement Board responsibilities
- 4) Common Code Violations
- 5) Commonly Used Codes
- 6) Code Case Development
- 7) Standard Housing Code
- 8) Sumter County Ordinance 98-4 (creation of the Code Enforcement Board)
- 9) Article V – Code Enforcement Board
- 10) Florida Statutes – Chapter 162 – County Code Enforcement

- IV. OPEN FORUM – QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION:
THE BOARD MEMBERS INTRODUCED THEMSELVES AND OFFERED BACKGROUND INFORMATION. MR. RUSU EXPLAINED THE CITIZENS AGAINST TRASH IN SUMTER PROGRAM HAS BEEN TURNED OVER TO SOLID WASTE. MR. RUSU EXPLAINED THE BUILDING DEPARTMENT WILL ATTEMPT TO HANDLE ALL BUILDING RELATED ISSUES BEFORE THEY DEVELOP INTO CODE ISSUES. CODE INSPECTORS VERSUS BUILDING INSPECTORS WERE DISCUSSED. MR. RUSU EXPLAINED MANY CODE COMPLAINTS ARE FILED DUE TO NEIGHBORHOOD DISPUTES. MR. HAWKINS EXPLAINED THE COMPLAINANT'S INFORMATION WOULD BE PUBLIC RECORD AS PART OF THE COMPLAINT FORM. MR. RUSU INFORMED THE BOARD THE NEW COMPLAINT FORM WILL BE POSTED ON THE COUNTY'S WEBSITE. MR. RUSU DISCUSSED THE LIMITATIONS ON PROPERTIES POSTED WITH NO TRESPASSING SIGNS. MR. RUSU EXPLAINED BUILDING INSPECTORS CHECK FOR CODE VIOLATIONS WHILE IN THE FIELD PERFORMING BUILDING INSPECTIONS. MR. RUSU SUGGESTED UTILIZING CHURCH ASSISTANCE FOR THOSE VIOLATORS UNABLE TO HELP THEMSELVES. LIABILITY ISSUES ON PRIVATE PROPERTY WERE DISCUSSED. THE BOARD DISCUSSED OLD CASES THAT HAVE NEVER BEEN BROUGHT INTO COMPLIANCE. MR. HAWKINS EXPLAINED THE CURRENT COUNTY ATTORNEY, RANDALL THORNTON, IS RETIRING AND A NEW ATTORNEY WILL BE HIRED, EITHER AS A COUNTY EMPLOYEE OR THROUGH A CONTRACT. THE BOARD DISCUSSED COST RECOVERY FOR THE COUNTY BRINGING PROPERTY INTO COMPLIANCE AND BILLING THE VIOLATORS. THE BOARD DISCUSSED THE IMPORTANCE OF POSTING 911 NUMBERS. MR. RUSU EXPLAINED ALL COMPLAINTS REGARDING A BUSINESS BEING OPERATED FROM A RESIDENCE ARE RESEARCHED WITH THE STATE FOR CORPORATION INFORMATION. THE BOARD DISCUSSED THE RECOMMENDED TIME FRAMES FOR CODE CASES. MR. HAWKINS EXPLAINED HOMESTEAD PROPERTY CAN NOT BE FORECLOSED UPON ACCORDING TO FLORIDA LAW. MR. HAWKINS STATED THE BOARD'S DUTIES WOULD REMAIN THE SAME. MR. RUSU DISCUSSED GENERAL FUNDS VERSUS BUILDING DEPARTMENT FUNDS. LOW INTEREST LOANS FOR THE PURPOSE OF ASSISTING WITH CLEAN UP COSTS, AND A SPECIAL ACCOUNT SPECIFICALLY SET UP FOR THAT PURPOSE WERE DISCUSSED. THE BOARD DISCUSSED PENDING CASES LEFT BY THE CODE INSPECTORS. SPECIAL MASTER VS. CODE BOARD WAS DISCUSSED. ISSUING ONE-TIME VOUCHERS TO TRASH VIOLATORS THAT WOULD ALLOW THEM ONE TRIP TO THE LANDFILL WAS DISCUSSED. MR. KEGAN HAS AGREED TO CONTINUE THE ANNUAL CHRISTMAS DINNER TRADITION. THE BOARD WELCOMED THE BUILDING INSPECTORS TO CODE ENFORCEMENT.
- V. ADJOURNMENT – MEETING ADJOURNED AT 7PM.